

Message Text

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ACTION MBFR-02

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ROME

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NOFORN

LIMDIS

FROM US MBFR REP

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PARM

SUBJECT: MBFR: ITALIAN POSITION ON HUNGARY AND MEETINGS OF THE
19

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. IN CONVERSATION ON MARCH 15,
ITALIAN MBFR REP PETRIGNANI TOLD US REP THAT HE WAS
BOTH UNABLE AND UNWILLING TO MOVE TO ANY INFORMAL
ALL-19 FORMAT TO DISCUSS AGENDA AND OTHER MATTERS.
PETRIGNANI SAID THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT ALSO OFFICI-
ALLY OPPOSED ANY PARTICIPATION IN ANY PLAN TO SEEK
TO RESOLVE THE HUNGARIAN ISSUE THROUGH AN AGREEMENT
TO LIMIT INCREASES OF FOREIGN FORCES IN HUNGARY AND
ITALY, ALTHOUGH HE COULD PERSONALLY FORESEE A
SITUATION IN WHICH IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO AGREE ON
SUCH MEASURES DURING ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS. ITALY
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FAVORED A NON- CIRCUMVENTION CLAUSE WHICH WOULD NOT MENTION ANY STATE SPECIFICALLY. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE CONVERSATION ON MARCH 15, ITALIAN REP TOLD US REP THAT, QUITE ASIDE FROM HIS PERSONAL PREFERENCES, WHICH WERE OPPOSED TO THE CONCEPT IN ANY EVENT, HE WAS OPERATING UNDER CATEGORICAL INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO ENTER INTO ANY NEW MEETING OF ALL 19 OTHER THAN PURELY SOCIAL OCCASIONS, NO MATTER HOW INFORMAL A FORMAT. ITALIAN PERMREP HAD INFORMED NATO' S SYG LUNS OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS ALSO. ITALIAN REP SAID THAT, DURING CONVERSATIONS ON MARCH 14 AND 15, HE HAD COME UNDER VERY HEAVY PRESSURE FROM FRG AND UK TO GO ALONG WITH THESE INFORMAL MEETINGS. HE HAD TOLD THEM THEN THAT HE WAS UTTERLY UNABLE TO AGREE PRIOR TO DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER IN NAC, SO THAT THEY WERE WASTING THEIR TIME WITH HIM.

3. ITALIAN REP SAID THAT NOT ONLY WAS HE CONSTRAINED NOT TO AGREE TO THIS PROPOSAL, BUT HE WOULD NOT THINK IT INTRINSICALLY GOOD IF THE ALLIES ASKED THE SOVIETS TO DISCUSS AGENDA AND OTHER MATTERS IN A GROUP OF 19. SUCH AN ACTION WOULD GREATLY REDUCE ALLIED LEVERAGE ON THE SOVIETS AS REGARDS SOME SOLUTION OF THE STATUS OF HUNGARY. THE PROBABLE OUTCOME IF THE SOVIETS AGREED TO INFORMAL SESSIONS MIGHT BE THAT THE INFORMAL GROUP MIGHT COMPLETE ALL OF ITS BUSINESS MORE OR LESS SUCCESSFULLY, ONLY TO FIND THAT IT HAD BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND A SOLUTION OF THE HUNGARIAN QUESTION, AND THAT THE ENTIRE PARTICIPATION QUESTION WOULD THEN BE CARRIED OVER TO THE NEGOTIATIONS PROPER TO BE RESOLVED THERE. ITALIAN REP THOUGHT THE ALLIES SHOULD AIM FOR A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD CONCEDE SPECIAL STATUS TO HUNGARY BUT ON THE BASIS OF A WRITTEN UNDERSTANDING THAT THIS STATUS WOULD NOT PREJUDICE INCLUSION OF HUNGARY IN A NON- CIRCUMVENTION AGREEMENT DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS. ITALIAN REP SAID THAT SUCH A POSITION COULD BE CAST IN NEUTRAL TERMS WITHOUT SPECIFIC MENTION OF HUNGARY IN ORDER TO AVOID A RESPONSE MENTIONING ITALY, AND NOTED THAT ROME HAD BEEN WORKING ON A FORMULA OF THIS TYPE WHICH WOULD BE KNOWN TO US REP. ITALIAN REP SAID
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HIS AUTHORITIES HAD TAKEN A FORMAL POSITION AGAINST

ANOTHER THEORETICAL POSSIBILITY IN THE CURRENT SITUATION, THAT OF AN AGREEMENT AT THIS TIME BY HUNGARY AND ITALY TO LIMIT INCREASES OF STATIONED FORCES IN BOTH THEIR TERRITORIES IN THE EVENT OF AN OVERALL MBFR AGREEMENT. TO GET INVOLVED IN SUCH AN AGREEMENT NOW WOULD PLACE THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT WHERE, CAUGHT BETWEEN SOVIET AND ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY PRESSURES, IT WOULD BE HAULED, STEP BY STEP, INTO THE STATUS OF A DIRECT PARTICIPANT AND PLACED UNDER PRESSURE TO REDUCE ITS FORCES. ITALIAN REP SAID THAT SPEAKING PERSONALLY, ONCE ITALIAN STATUS AS A SPECIAL PARTICIPANT HAD BEEN FIRMLY ESTABLISHED AND NEGOTIATIONS HAD STARTED, HE COULD ENVISION POSSIBLE APPLICATION OF THIS TYPE OF AGREEMENT TO ITALY, BUT THIS WOULD BE UNDER TOTALLY DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WOULD NOT ESTABLISH A DYNAMIC WHEREBY ITALY WOULD BE DRAWN INTO A STATUS AS A FULL PARTICIPANT AGAINST ITS WILL.

4. ITALIAN REP SAID THAT IN LINE WITH OVERALL ITALIAN VIEWS ON THIS SUBJECT, ITALIAN PERMREP AT NATO WOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO TRY TO BRING ABOUT EARLY GENERAL DISCUSSION OF MBFR AND TO SEEK AGREEMENT IN ITS COURSE TO THE PROPOSITION THAT MBFR FORCE REDUCTIONS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO REDUCTIONS OF SOVIET AND AMERICAN FORCES, AT LEAST AT THE OUTSET. ITALIAN REP SAID THAT ON OCCASION OF VISIT BY ANDREOTTI TO WASHINGTON SCHEDULED FOR ABOUT APRIL 20, IN WHICH HE HIMSELF MIGHT PARTICIPATE, ANDREOTTI WOULD PRESENT ABOVE POSITION AND SEEK US AGREEMENT TO IT.

5. US REP POINTED OUT THAT HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE CURRENT DISCUSSION OF PARTICIPATION WITH THE SOVIETS MIGHT LAST A CONSIDERABLE TIME AND ALSO THAT DISCUSSION BY NAC OF THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE DEFINITIVE SOVIET POSITION, WHEN ITS DETAILS BECAME KNOWN, MIGHT, BASED ON PAST EXPERIENCE, TAKE A STILL LONGER TIME. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT MIGHT BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO FIND SOME ACCEPTABLE WAY OF GETTING DISCUSSION STARTED ON THE AGENDA ITEMS. HE THOUGHT THAT IF A CLEAR SOVIET POSITION WAS ELICITED

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AND SENT TO NAC FOR DISCUSSION, IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE FOR THE ALLIES TO ADVANCE THEIR PREPARED AGENDA POSITIONS ON A MULTIPLE BILATERAL BASIS. THIS WOULD AT LEAST GET THE PROCESS OF DISCUSSING THE AGENDA STARTED WHILE AWAITING OUTCOME OF NAC DISCUSSION.

ITALIAN REP SAID THAT ONE COULD CONSIDER THIS
POSSIBILITY. HUMES

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